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Home Computer Purchase Program for State and School Employees

What is the home computer purchase program?

The program allows employees of public school districts and state government to purchase personal computers for home use at a discount. It is similar to programs at leading corporations and provides employees with an additional benefit at no cost to taxpayers.

IBM was selected to establish and administer the program after the Georgia Technology Authority evaluated proposals from several companies. IBM offered the largest discount and best value based on quality, product selection and technical support.

Legislation authorizing the program was enacted by the Georgia General Assembly during the 2001 legislative session.

Who can participate in the program?

All school district and state employees may participate. If you work in a county or other local office and are eligible for state benefits such as health insurance and retirement, you may participate in the program. State retirees are also eligible.

How much is the discount and what kinds of computers and related equipment are available?

The program offers a 10 percent discount on IBM's home computing products, including desktop PCs, select ThinkPad notebooks, accessories and software. The discount also applies to sale items and special promotions. Specific products and prices are available on the program's Web site or by calling a toll-free number. You can obtain the Web address and telephone number by e-mailing gtainfo@gta.ga.gov. You'll also receive information about time-limited, special offers when they are available. The price you are quoted will include the 10 percent discount.

IBM's call center has 600 customer service representatives who can help select a system based on your individual needs. They can also tell you about special promotions and provide technical support after the purchase.

Can a computer be configured to individual needs and budgets?

Yes, employees may specify various components, including the type and speed of the processor, the amount of memory, the size of the hard drive, the type of monitor and many other details. If you aren't sure what kind of system best meets your needs, tell IBM's customer service representatives how you plan to use the system and let them guide you through the selection process.

Are products available from companies other than IBM?

Only products offered by IBM may be purchased through the program. Besides its own computers, monitors and printers, IBM offers printers from companies such as Hewlett Packard, Canon and Epson.

How do I place an order?

Orders may be placed on the program's Web site or by calling a toll-free number. You can obtain the Web address and telephone number by e-mailing gtainfo@gta.ga.gov.

How do I pay for my order?

Payroll deduction may be arranged through one of the credit unions serving school district and state employees. IBM's customer service representatives will fax a description of the computer system you want to purchase, a price quote and a quote number. You can then take the price quote to your credit union to apply for a loan and arrange payroll deduction. When you're ready to place an order, call IBM's toll-free number and give the customer service representative your quote number. Your credit union may be able to place the order for you. When placing an order, employees may also pay by credit card or arrange special financing through MBNA, a financial services company.

How long will it take to fill an order?

IBM ships some computers and peripherals the same day they are ordered, but the delivery time varies according to the shipping options selected. The "Buy Today, Ship Today" offer is not available for all products, such as individually configured systems. Items are shipped directly to the employee's home, generally 2-5 days after placing an order.

Is technical support available after the purchase?

Yes, employees can obtain free technical support from the program's toll-free number.

Are the purchases subsidized by state government or school systems?

No. Employees purchase the equipment directly from IBM and pay for it with their own private funds. No state agency or local school system is a party to any purchase.

What if I have questions?

Send your questions to Jeff McCord at the Georgia Technology Authority at jmccord@gta.ga.gov.